

amendment there is no easy way for a police officer to determine the legality of a gun being concealed by an individual with a permit from outside the State. This confusion, and the increase in the number of guns on the street, could result in violent incidents, some of which could lead to more deaths from gun violence. The Senate should be working to make the job of police officers safer. The Thune amendment does the opposite.

The amendment takes away the right of a State to determine who can carry a concealed gun within that State. As a result, the amendment will increase the number of concealed guns that will be allowed on any given street. More than 400 mayors, numerous State legislators, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association oppose this amendment because of the danger it brings to our streets, our citizens, and our law enforcement. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote against Senator THUNE's amendment. It is unwise policy that could lead to tragic results.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, how much time is left on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Nine minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I yield myself 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the Senator from California has made some comments, and actually both Senators from California talked about the issue of assault weapons. Of course, assault weapons—as my colleague from Oklahoma pointed out, it is very difficult to conceal an assault weapon. It is not something you are going to be running around—it is not a concealed weapon. Obviously, when you get into the State of California, those weapons are illegal.

I think it is fair to point out again that any State can impose restrictions on the people who come into their State with a concealed carry permit from another State. So State laws still trump when it comes to the place where guns can be carried.

To this issue of multiple guns being brought into a State, States can also say the permit only applies to one gun. Obviously, that is an issue on which a State can rule. Secondly, the issue of multiple guns I would think would fall under the rubric of trafficking, which is a Federal offense. It is illegal. For people who have committed crimes, that is illegal under Federal laws. They cannot get guns in the first place—or at least they are not supposed to get guns. It is a Federal crime if they do. People who have a history of mental illness—all these issues are addressed in Federal law, which provides a floor against all these types of things that are being suggested.

Much of what has been suggested here really is scare tactics, it is fear mongering. There is no basis on which

to make many of the arguments. It is totally speculative that somehow this amendment is going to lead to all kinds of people, thugs and gangsters, getting guns and then transporting them someplace else in the country.

I will tell you, I do not think there are too many criminals—by the way, criminals commit the crimes. The Senator from New Jersey talked about the thousands who are killed by guns every year. Most of them are killed by criminals. There may have been an exception or two where somebody had a concealed carry permit, but relative to the general population, it is minuscule.

If you think about the number of crimes that are committed every year by criminals, what we ought to be doing is focusing on criminals, the people who commit crimes. Criminals are not going to go down to the courthouse in Sioux Falls, SD, and say: I want to get a concealed carry permit, or anywhere in this country, for that matter, because almost every State, with three exceptions, by law does a background check. So in order to own a gun or possess a gun, you have to go through a background check. So to get a concealed carry permit, you also have to go through a background check. I do not think most criminals are going to be going down and saying: I want to get a background check so I can get a gun so I can haul it and commit a crime in some other State. That is ludicrous. Think about the logic of that. For anybody who has a criminal record, obviously, the background check is going to reveal that. They are not going to be able to either acquire a gun or get a concealed carry permit, which means they are going to do what they usually do; that is, get those firearms illegally and commit crimes and felonies because that is what criminals do.

I want to mention some of those who have endorsed this amendment. The NRA has endorsed this amendment. Gun Owners of America—I have a letter from them endorsing this amendment. Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms has endorsed this amendment. The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, which, as I pointed out, represents a lot of the truckdrivers across the country, endorses this. This is a real issue for them because they are traveling across State lines in interstate travel on a regular basis. This is something they have advocated for a long time. The Passenger-Cargo Security Group, which, of course, represents a lot of those who fly cargo in this country, has endorsed it. GOProud has endorsed this amendment. And the Pink Pistols group has endorsed this amendment. So there are a number of groups, organizations out there that have endorsed this amendment that believe, as I do, it represents a common-sense approach that balances the constitutional right people in this country have to keep and bear arms—the second amendment right. It is in the Bill of Rights. All the other amendments in

the Bill of Rights apply across State lines, and it seems to me, at least, this one should too, subject to restrictions that are imposed by the individual States. This does not preempt any of those.

States have different restrictions that apply and restrict the place and the manner in which firearms may be transported into their States. So what we are simply trying to do is clarify this patchwork of different regulations and laws and requirements that different States have all over the country, so people, law-abiding citizens—not the criminals who are being referred to who commit the crimes in this country—so law-abiding individuals who want to defend themselves against those very criminals have the opportunity to do so by being able to possess a firearm if they have a concealed carry permit.

As I said, every State is a little different as to how you go about getting one of those permits, but every State has its own requirements, and all of the States, with a couple exceptions, have background checks as a part of that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 5 minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Two minutes 15 seconds.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this morning around Washington, hundreds of lobbyists strapped on their suits and their ties and went to work waiting for the Thune amendment and his theory and their theory on keeping America safer by putting more guns on the street. Across America today, thousands of law enforcement officials strapped on their guns and their badges and went out on those mean streets to risk their lives to keep us safe.

Did you listen to the groups that have endorsed the Thune amendment? Do you know what is missing? Not a single law enforcement group supports JOHN THUNE's amendment. The men and women who are risking their lives for our safety every day do not support his amendment. They oppose it. Do you know why they oppose it? Because they realize there are different standards in different States for concealed carry and in some States almost no standards at all. They realize that in 17 States you do not need to even prove you know how to fire a gun safely. And under JOHN THUNE's amendment, those people can go into States that require a test or even a test on a firing range—the 31 States that require it—and they can carry a gun without any evidence that they know how to use it.

There are also some 35 States that prohibit people convicted of certain misdemeanor crimes from carrying concealed firearms. That means that 13 other States can send their people in